

## ENDANGERED SPECIES ON THE BEACH

At 7:00 a.m. on a particularly cold and windy morning in rainy June, Endangered Species Officer, Jake Emerson, waited in his Suburban for the arrival of the 13 piping plover nest monitors

on shift from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. At their designated locations that stretch as far as Saquish, nearly 30 monitors on duty throughout the season collect data on the bird activity, observe and try to prevent human disturbances, and stop traffic when birds cross the road. Consultants and scientists at Northeastern and Bridgewater State Colleges organize all recorded data and send it to the Duxbury Beach Reservation for further research and study. Because Federal regulations prohibit human activity on the beach without proper monitoring, "the monitors make it possible for the beach to be open," said Emerson. "We understand that people pay a lot to access the beach which is why we strive to provide safe and reasonable access for all visitors...the ability to co-exist is there."

After opening the first crossover, Emerson continued down the beach to check on the nests. Two-year monitor and college sophomore Kate Jones observed the plovers from a distance with binoculars so as not to disturb them. "You have to be very aware of where the birds are and what they're doing," said Jones.

Although Clark's Island, the Gurnet, and Saquish all belong to Plymouth, Duxbury has a positive working relationship with the border towns and they all depend upon mutual aid. "If something happens on the Gurnet, we can get out there a lot faster than Plymouth," said Mullen as he took note of all activity before heading into the full harbor. "When you're out here, you

keep in mind who's out on the water, where they've been, and where they're going."

As the summer winds down, the harbor will empty as boats enter storage, and beach activity will slow down as vacations end and kids go back to school. Colder months will bring hunters and fisher-

man to the waters, and the responsibilities of the Harbormaster will change.

Another summer passes, and with it, the hard work of those on the waterfront to protect what Beers affectionately refers to as, "the most wonderful place in the world."



The Harbormaster's dock is teeming with boat activity in the summer months.